

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are pending in the Application. Claims 2 and 3 have been amended.

Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 4609064 (*Suzuki*). *Suzuki* does not teach or suggest a drive system control method with all the limitations of Claims 1-3.

Suzuki does not disclose a system of inhibiting drive system switching if only the steering angle is over a predetermined angle. In fact, *Suzuki* teaches automatic switching from four wheel drive to two wheel drive under that circumstance.

The only reference to inhibition of switching cited relates to conditions involving the sensing of speed and wheel angle, not wheel angle alone. There, the only switching which is prevented is the automatic switching from four wheel to two wheel drive under those specific combined wheel angle / speed conditions.

There is no discussion or structure in *Suzuki* for prevention of switching from two wheel drive to four wheel drive, under any circumstances.

Further, *Suzuki* does not discuss manual switching of drive modes, only automatic switching. The entire reference is devoted to an automatic system. There is no disclosure of a manual switching structure or method, or a means to prevent such manual switching.

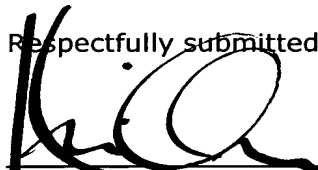
The present invention inhibits switching in both directions, that is, from two to four and from four to two wheel drive modes. Further, in one embodiment, the presently claimed invention inhibits switching upon sensing of a particular wheel position alone, apart from vehicle speed sensing.

For these reasons, and in view of the amendments in the claims, it is asserted that all of the objections have been obviated.

CONCLUSION

Applicant asserts that all of the objections have been obviated and requests examination on the merits.

Respectfully submitted,

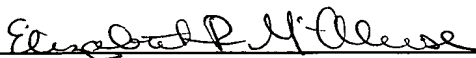


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